

Application for the TNSF Fellowship

Technology and National Security Fellowship

Justin Vasel — Indiana University (for now)
27 July 2020

OUTLINE

My three requirements for fulfilling work

What is the Technology and National Security Fellowship?

Application process & timeline (during a pandemic)

Office placement

What's next?

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Any job that I take on must...

- be interesting and exciting
- allow me to apply my current skill set in a creative way, while being challenging enough to foster the development of new skills
- allow my contributions to have a positive impact in the world

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**NATIONAL SECURITY
INNOVATION NETWORK**

"The ***Technology and National Security Fellowship*** is an opportunity for technologists and entrepreneurs to serve their country by embedding with key decision makers at the top levels of the U.S. Government to provide advice and emerging expertise for issues at the critical intersection of national security and technology."



Selected Fellows must be:

- A U.S. Citizen
- Recent or Imminent STEM graduates (or have meaningful equivalent work experience)
- Have a desire to contribute their technical knowledge to the national security enterprise
- Willing to serve in non-partisan roles on the immediate staffs of key decision makers in Congress and at the Pentagon
- Willing to embed in a host office for a period of one (1) year

More information:

<https://www.nsin.us/tnsf/>

<https://www.nsin.us/news/2020-04-06-nsin-launches-tnsf/>

Congressional offices hosting Fellows will be limited to:

- Personal offices of Members of the HASC; SASC; HAC-D; SAC-D; or
- Committee Staff for HASC; SASC; HAC-D; SAC-D

Pentagon offices hosting Fellows will be limited to:

- Senior defense officials within the Office of the Secretary of Defense; or
- Immediate Offices of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; or
- Presidentially Appointed, Senate Confirmed officials at or above the Assistant Secretary level within the Military Services



Tweet



Science Policy Jobs

@SciPolJobs

The National Security Innovation Network starting the Technology & National Security Fellowship to place early/mid-career STEM professionals at the Pentagon or on Capitol Hill to work on technology in a national security context, apply by May 1 **#SciPolJobs**



The National Security Innovation Network

Our National Service Portfolio creates new models and pathways to service for those wishing to serve without having to put on a ...

nsin.us

11:50 AM · Apr 8, 2020 · **TweetDeck**

6 Retweets and comments **6** Likes



Q: How did I hear about this?

A: Twitter (*seriously*)

Useful accounts to follow:

- Science Policy Jobs ([@SciPolJobs](https://twitter.com/SciPolJobs))
- National Science Policy Network ([@SciPolNetwork](https://twitter.com/SciPolNetwork))
- Journal of Sci. Policy & Governance ([@SciPolJournal](https://twitter.com/SciPolJournal))
- Nat'l Security Innovation Network ([@NSIN_us](https://twitter.com/NSIN_us))
- S&T Policy Fellowships ([@AAAS_STPF](https://twitter.com/AAAS_STPF))

Hashtags to follow:

- [#SciPol](https://twitter.com/hashtag/SciPol)
- [#SciencePolicy](https://twitter.com/hashtag/SciencePolicy)
- [#SciComm](https://twitter.com/hashtag/SciComm)

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Timeline for this year

06 Apr, 2020: TNSF Application Opens

01 May, 2020: TNSF Application Closes

29 May, 2020: TNSF Selection Notifications Issued

15 Jul, 2020: TNSF Fellows Matched with Host Office

10 Aug Sep, 2020: Pilot TNSF Cohort Orientation Begins - Arlington, VA

14 Aug Sep, 2020: Orientation Ends

17 Aug Sep, 2020: Pilot TNSF Cohort Begins

27 Aug Sep, 2021: Pilot TNSF Cohort Ends

Application Materials

Essay Prompt #1: Please describe why you would like to serve as a Technology and National Security Fellow and what unique contributions you would be able to make to the U.S. Congress and Department of Defense. (500 words)

Essay Prompt #2: Please explain the importance of technology literacy and science policy as it relates to national security. (500 words)

Resume. Probably the hardest part of the application: reducing my CV to a 1–2 page resume.

Academic Transcripts

2–3 Letters of Reference

Interviews

Interview #1 (before placement) Early May

- Hiring team at NSIN (3 people)
- Conducted via Google Hangouts
- Overall a fairly laid-back interview
- Questions about my interests in the fellowship specifically and national security more broadly, research background and experience, and personal interests
- Roughly 1 hour long

Interview #2 (before placement) Late May

- Managing Directory of NSIN
- Conducted via Google Hangouts
- Similar in many ways to Interview #1
- More concrete discussions about differences between placements and workplace culture at Congress and DoD.

"Interview" #3 (after placement) Early July

- Deputy Assistant Secretary of U.S. Air Force
- Conducted via Microsoft Teams
- Different from interviews #1 and #2.
- Some discussion about my interests.
- Mostly a briefing about the office and the types of projects they work on.

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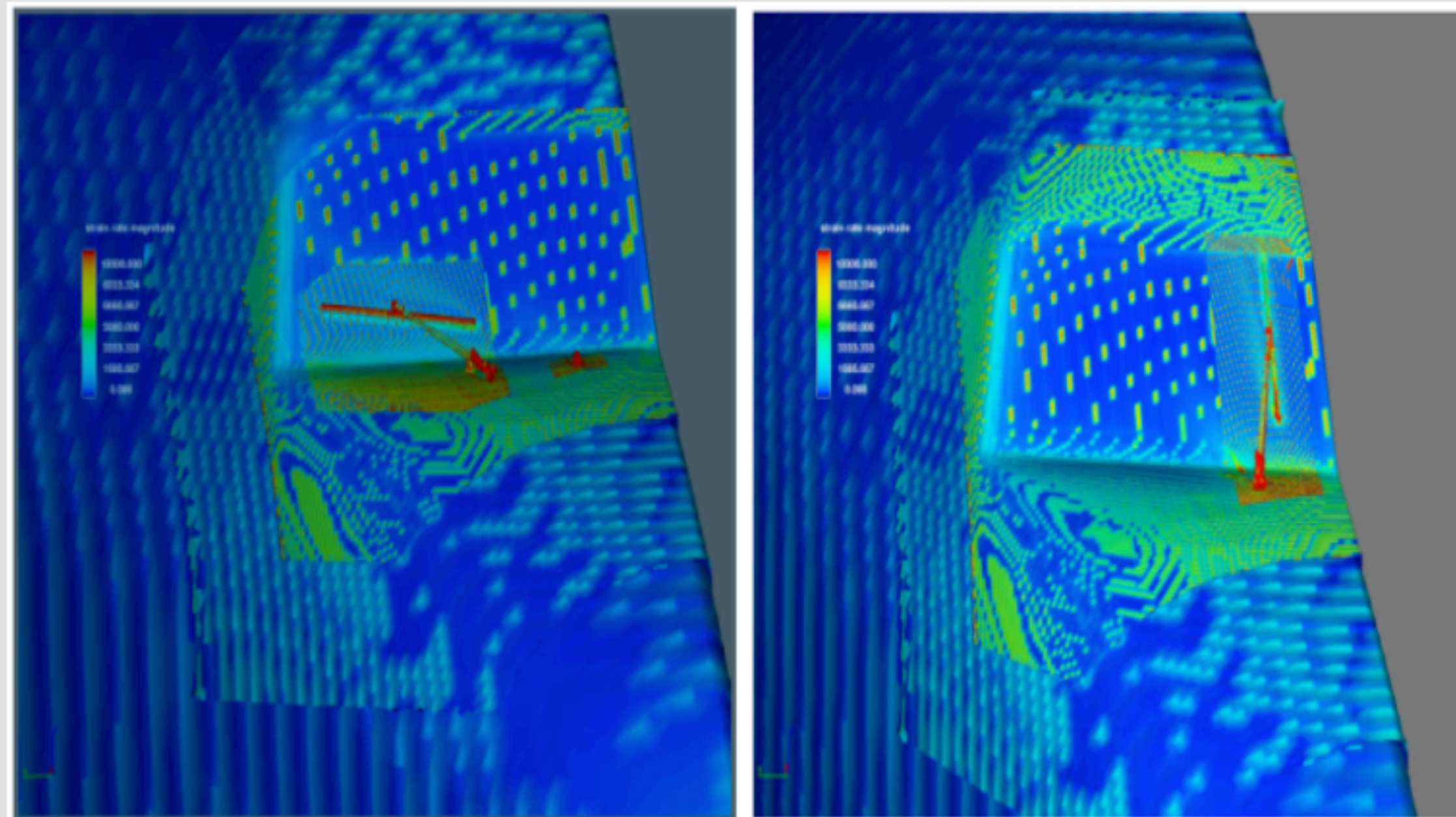
RESILIENT ENERGY **RELIABLE ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE** **READY INSTALLATIONS**





Vertical wiper blades reduce aircraft drag, tests show

By Corrie Poland / Published April 16, 2020



[PHOTO DETAILS](#) / [DOWNLOAD HI-RES](#) 1 of 1

Computational fluid dynamics (CFD) analysis, conducted by Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and Southwest Research Institute, shows the nose of a KC-135 Stratotanker, as the wiper blades are positioned horizontally (left) and vertically (right). The red indicates an area of high aerodynamic drag.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. --

Aerodynamics testing on the KC-135 Stratotanker confirmed vertically mounted wiper blades reduce aircraft drag by approximately 1 percent during cruise conditions, potentially saving the Air Force \$7 million annually in associated fuel costs.

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By Corrie Poland, Air Force Operational Energy (SAF/IEN) / Published March 18, 2020



Rapidly deployed digital tool advances energy in wargaming effort

By Corrie Poland / Published June 24, 2020



Applying HEP skills to the job:

- Gathering, cleaning, monitoring, and analyzing large data sets
- Identifying and applying novel techniques to difficult problems
- Optimizing systems to increase efficiency
- Distilling complex information into concise summaries to convince skeptical decision-makers to take action
- Delivering results under pressure (only 1 year to make an impact!)

Benefits



Benefits

- One-of-a-kind workplace
- Competitive salary (GS-10 level)
- Federal employee health benefits
- Retirement benefits through Thrift Savings Plan

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What's next?

- Do the best job that I can as a de facto ambassador for the HEP community
- Finish my thesis!!!
- Scout out the government/policy landscape, make connections
- Next job: more government work? a return to HEP research? something else entirely?
- Encourage fellow researchers to consider applying for similar positions to address the dearth of scientific expertise in government decision-making

Interested or curious in this career path? USE ME!

- I'm happy to be a resource for those considering a temporary or permanent transition to government/policy work.
- Email me anytime
justin.vasel@gmail.com
- Follow me on Twitter where I will post details of day-to-day life in the position
[@justinvasel \(https://twitter.com/justinvasel\)](https://twitter.com/justinvasel)
- Connect with me on LinkedIn (I guess? idk I'm still new to this platform)
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